## Session 8A: Monitoring and the Increase in Mining Activities in Region 5 March 20, 2008

## Tribal concerns regarding mining activities within the Mesabi Iron Range

Nancy Schuldt, Fond du Lac Band

Fond du Lac, along with other tribes in Northern Minnesota, has been closely tracking the environmental review and permitting process for numerous ferrous mining projects (taconite, iron nuggets, direct reduced iron and electric arc steel furnace) currently underway or proposed on the Mesabi Iron Range. Due to worldwide demand for metals, significant low-grade copper/nickel/platinum group mineral deposits within this historic iron mining region have been the focus of accelerated exploration and environmental review as well. This massive industrial footprint affects treaty-protected natural and cultural resources within the 1854 Ceded Territories. Minnesota tribes have been working together to review projects, share expertise and comment letters, and to press the state and federal agencies to consider tribal concerns to a greater extent. We have also requested financial and technical assistance from EPA to enable us to keep pace with the workload, and to reaffirm applicable federal regulations.

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